For the Three of Us by brokenpromisesandhope

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5 times Jonathan loved Steve and Nancy and one time they loved him back.

For the Three of Us

Author's Note:

> YALL.
> This is 7.5k because I have no self control. I tried to combine so many things, and I have so much more stoncy to come, but if you particularly like this fic PLEASE COMMENT AND KUDOS and I can write so much more. I thought it would be easier to write a modern au that's why this isn't based in the 80s so yeah. Also notes clarifying some of the tags will be at the end!
> xx
> t
> Also I WILL WRITE FROM STEVES POV AND NANCYS IF YOU WANNA KNOW SPECIFIC THINGS THEY WERE DOING IN THE FIC AN WHY

1

Jonathan has been in love with Nancy for years. Probably for all of his life. Their mothers had been inseparable since high school, because that's the thing about Hawkins, Indiana, people never leave. So both Karen Martin and Joyce Simon got married too young, and pregnant within six weeks of each other.

They had lived on the same block too apparently, before both girls, because they were both still girls when they had gotten married, figured out how horrible the men they'd married were. Lonnie was worse than Ted of course, and even older than him too. Whereas Ted didn't care so long as the house was clean, and dinner was cooked, and Karen's legs were spread, Lonnie cared too much about everything. And everything made him angry.

Apparently him and Nancy had been inseparable too. They'd had a fake wedding in the Wheeler's backyard when they were five years old, and they enjoyed Taco Tuesday together, swapping who hosted, every week. Nancy was his best friend. Nancy kissed his bruises. She made everyone in the fourth grade sign his cast when his father had broken his arm. She was always there for him, a walkie talkie click away.

Until Middle School, when CPS had gotten involved because Jonathan's elbow was broken, again, and Will had bruises on his stomach. And Joyce and Lonnie got a divorce, and he took himself, and his money, and his abuse, and their house, and their car, and their things, and their mom's spirit.

They were forced to move to the very edge of town, in a dumpy house that felt more like an apartment, and Joyce was forced to work three jobs, and Jonathan was forced to grow up very fast. And Nancy was forced into the popular group of girls, and there was just no room for Jonathan anymore.

They still talked of course, they had threads of texts, and she was in some of his classes, and Mike and Will were still inseparable, even though Karen and Joyce could barely hold a conversation if they ran into each other in the grocery store, what seemed a whole lifetime of history between them, even though in actuality it was just the difference between where the white bread ended and the wheat bread started.

But it had been five years since he'd slept in Nancy's bed, and Nancy held his hands and wiped his tears and told him she loved him, and he was important. And now that she was dating Steve Harrington, it was never going to happen.

He should be over it, he knows. It's been five years. But when Nancy stopped being his friend, he stopped having anyone. He'd never had friends before, and now he really didn't. He came to school in the same few outfits that seemed to shrink before it was even a thought to get him more, shoes that were too small, and smelling, if there hadn't been money to pay the water bill on time. He was always

falling asleep in class, bruises permanently stamped under his eyes, with no school supplies, and no homework done, because it was more important to help Will understand fractions.

He was a freak, queer, a fag, a punching bag, an embarassment, the names never stopped. He'd stopped caring long ago. He didn't have time to care. He didn't have time to do laundry and cook, and clean, and work, and take care of Will, and make sure his mom slept some, made sure she could get a couple days off of work every once in awhile without worrying about them starving, so he really didn't time to worry about the bullshit that kids from school threw at him.

2

But apparently he had time to be bisexual. Apparently he had time to be heartbroken. By the hottest, most popular, most secretly hated couple in school. He'd been in love with Nancy forever, so he was used to her beauty. Her soft waved hair and lightly made up, wide blue eyes. Her glossy lips and the way she always smelled like strawberries. Her sweaters and fitted jeans and the way she always had to look up at him because she was so short. Or even worse, the summertime, where he would walk Will over to the Wheelers and Nancy would be sitting on the porch in a sundress, all her tanned skin on display, bare feet and brightly painted toes in the grass as she came up to give him a hug. He could smell the sunlight and tanning oil on her skin.

He was used to the way she made his heart race. The way his fingers itched to push her hair out of her eyes, or count her eyelashes. Or her freckles. Trace her cupids bowl with her tongue. Rest his hands on her waist like they belonged there. Sleep in her bed again. Roll up his sleeves, all the way. And show her.

But they're not those kind of friends anymore. And so when Mike invites Jonathan and Will to his pool party, a week before school starts, he tries not to stare at Nancy, her brown hair piled on top of her head, sunglasses perched on her nose, hands on her hips as she

stands in front of the kids in her pale pink bathing suit, repeating the pool rules to the kids, belly button ring glinting in the sun. He'd had all summer to get over her, yet here he was again.

She makes small talk with him, sure, as she sits on the lounger next to him, tanning, and he sits quietly, watching the kids and trying to get rid of the white streaks, the copious amount of sunblock he'd had to put on, left on his legs. He still had his shirt on for obvious reasons. But then she gets a call from someone, and she chirps away on the phone for the rest of the afternoon, ignoring Jonathan. He's all too happy when Will decides he's water logged, and it's time to go home.

He goes in the back door to clean up their trash, and return the Wheeler's towels, and Nancy is sitting on the kitchen counter, sunglasses pushed on top of her head, cheeks red from a bit too much sun, skin still glistening from the oil,

"Thanks for coming! Maybe it can just be you and I next time!" She says, holding the mouthpiece of the phone away from her ear.

"Yeah of course. Thanks again Nance."

She waves her fingers at him and goes back to talking.

3

It's the thing with Steve Harrington that takes him by surprise. He doesn't remember having any serious thoughts about boys until he's in ninth grade. It's his first day of school. He'd been late, and in his

new outfit, well new to him, and he's got one pencil, and one notebook that's already half full from last year. He's lost, he can't remember where his first class is, and he's about ready to cry, he's tired, and his forearm is burning, and he's already been called a fag three times today.

He walks past the gym for what has to be the third time when someone stops him,

"Hey, you lost man?" The guy asks, and he's a lot. He's tall, only a few inches higher than Jonathan but it feels like a ton. His hair is pushed back from his face and voluminous, and he has beautifully tanned skin and bright brown eyes and plush pink lips. He's wearing a nice button down shirt and tight jeans, and a perfectly white pair of Keds. Jonathan can't think for a minute, he's so beautiful, and the guy's smile starts to falter, so Jonathan blurts out that he's lost.

And that was his first encounter with Steve Harrington. His perfect hair, and his smile, and the thick scent of his cologne, and the way he looked at you like talking to you was the most important thing in the world. His sports car, and his cigarettes, and his cheap Natty Light beer that his breath still sometimes smelt like on Monday mornings.

He felt something from the first moment he saw Steve, and his arm burned in a good way when Steve patted him and told him to see him around, sending Jonathan into his class with his number and a wish of good luck. That was over a year ago, and he'd been quietly grappling with that ever sense. It didn't help that six months into this disgusting, crush, he allowed himself to call it now, that his two crushes began dating each other.

He knew he'd never had a chance, with either. Nancy was beautiful,

and too big for this tiny town, and her mind was so far in the clouds that her feet were barely on the ground anymore, even at sixteen. And Steve was beautiful too, and so caring that it hurt Jonathan sometimes, to see someone that kind, especially when people had not been so kind to him.

Jonathan was so far gone, irreparably broken, and he had been for a long time. He was a freak, and he was poor, and too skinny, and not smart enough and he was a freak, and queer and a fag, and confused and selfish for wanting them both. He knew it, but that didn't make it hurt any less.

Especially when things started getting better. For everyone but him. His mom got a management position at the grocery story, and they got benefits, and she quit her other two jobs. She'd told him he could quit too. He could be a kid again. After he hadn't been in so long. He quit his night shift at the gas station, but stayed at the movie theater so he could get out of the house. His mom gave him money for clothes, and the fridge was stocked, and there was nothing to worry about. For everyone but him.

But he still had no friends, and he was still bisexual, and he was still sad, and his arms were still bleeding. But everyone was moving on. Everyone accept him. His mom let him use the car, and didn't make him babysit Will as much, and Steve and Nancy took that as a sign to spend more time together. He didn't know when he'd gone from Nancy distancing herself from him, into her wanting to spend every aching minute with him, and forcing Steve to tag along. This was probably around the same time that Steve and Tommy had fought outside the movie theater, because he'd called Nancy a slut, and Steve fought Billy Hargrove for spray painting 'fag' on Jonathan's locker.

Jonathan had tried to convince Steve that it wasn't a big deal, but he'd looked at Jonathan so mercilessly that he thought Steve would get arrested again for beating the shit out of Hargrove.

4

It's Thursday, and Steve has a basketball game tonight, and Nancy'd pretty much decided he was going, this morning in Geometry. So he heads to his locker as the bell rings, signaling the end of the day, and grabs his books and jacket. This winter hadn't been too bad, and it was starting to warm up, so he tugs his light jacket on, and heads out to the parking lot.

He's not surprised to see Nancy and Steve making out against his car. She's got him pressed against it, her hands fisted in his shirt, standing on her tiptoes. Her sweater is riding up in the back and he can see a small slice of pale skin. His fingers itch to take a picture. He curls them into fists and walks towards them. Clears his throat.

Nancy spins around, and looks up at him, eyes wide, lipstick smeared, cheeks red, smiling wide,

"Jonathan!" She cries, throwing her arms around his neck, pressing her body against his.

He hugs her back quickly, used to it by now, and then moves to look at Steve. His hair is slightly messed up, and there's pink lipstick on his chin and swollen lips. Jonathan doesn't know who he's most jealous of.

“Hey man,” Steve says with a smile, “come on, we’re grabbing coffee before the game.”

“Are you sure you have time?” Jonathan asks, but Nancy’s already bouncing over to the passenger side of the car.

“If you get your ass in the car we do,” Steve says, putting his hand on Jonathan’s shoulder, “Come on, I’ll even let you play your shitty music,” he says with a smirk, looking down at Jonathan.

He realizes how close they are, and moves away to hop in the back seat. He’s shocked to see Nancy there too, instead of her usual spot in the front seat. He pulls off his backpack, and buckles himself in, looking over at Nancy who is wildly close to him. She’s smiling and her goddamn lipstick is still smudged.

“Why are you in the back?” He mumbles, itching the back of his neck.

“Babe,” Steve whines, sliding into the driver's seat, cigarette hanging out of the corner of his mouth, “Why are you sitting back there?””

“I wanna sit by Jonathan,” Nancy says sweetly, patting his thigh, “now give me one of those,” she says, holding her hand out.

Steve rolls his eyes but hands back the pack of cigarettes and his lighter. Nancy takes it, and tucks one between her lips, and lights the cigarette. Jonathan can’t help but watch her. The way Nancy smokes

is fucking erotic. Her soft lips curl around the tip and she lets her eyes drop low on the inhale, holding it between her thin fingers, and pursing her lips in an ‘o’. Finally she looks over at him, eyebrow raised,

“Are you gonna play some music?”

Jonathan nods and scrambles to grab his phone, “Yeah, shit, sorry,” as he pulls up spotify, he’s literally on Steve’s family plan, because Steve got tired of the commercials, and connects to his stereo. Nancy smiles at him, and props her feet up on the center console, scooting closer to him, and Jonathan realizes she isn’t buckled. She tips her head back and closes her eyes, the veins in her neck straining and Steve turns up the radio, Paramore blasting.

It’s their favorite coffee shop, well, Steve and Nancy’s, considering they taught him what he’d like, and always paid for him, no matter what he did. Jonathan had never known coffee to taste so good. He usually chugged down black coffee as he ran on that and three hours of sleep for three days, but now there was so many different choices.

As Steve whips into a spot, they all scramble out of the car, and Nancy bounces in front of them. Thankfully it’s still slow, Steve didn’t know what a speed limit was, and it was pretty far from school, so they beat the rush and Nancy bounces up to the counter and orders for the three of them. Before Jonathan can even work his wallet out of his jeans, Steve is nudging them aside with a fancy debit card.

They wait at the end of the counter for their drinks,

“You’ve gotta let me pay sometimes,” he protests.

Steve looks back at him, “Why?”

“Because!”

“Well sorry I just wanna buy stuff for my -” he’s cut off by the barista, and he turns around to gather their drinks.

When he turns back around, his cheeks are pink and he hands them each their drinks. Nancy hands them both a straw, well hands Jonathan his and flicks Steve’s at him, with a stern look on her face, to which he frowns. Jonathan’s trying to figure out what’s going on, when Nancy links her arm through his, taking a sip of her iced coffee. They’ve turned him into someone who drinks iced coffee in the winter.

They sit in the parking lot, and the other two go back and forth between smoking and sipping their coffee, Jonathan picking songs in the background as the two of them tell him about their day. He can’t help but take his camera out then. He gets a shot of Steve with a hand in his hair, his cheeks hollowed around the straw, his hand out the window, ash falling from the butt of his cigarette. Nancy reapplying her lipstick, idly drumming on her knees that are pressed into the back of the passenger seat. They don’t have long, because Steve needs to change and warm up for the game, and sooner than they’d like, they’re headed back to school.

5

The gym is packed, but they have a good spot in the middle of the bleachers. He’s tired, and there’s homework he should be doing, but

somehow, sitting next to Nancy, waiting to watch Steve, feels great. Even though he's going to have to be up all night to finish everything.

Nancy's thigh is pressed against his and she keeps pressing close to him, so she can force him into snapchats with the ugliest filters. Not that it looks ugly on Nancy, just him. She's just finished sending a snap of them with flower crowns to Barb and Mike when she turns to him seriously,

"Jonathan?"

"Yes?" She'd pulled her hair into a ponytail, complaining it was hot, but there's a few pieces falling down, and there's a smudge of mascara on her right eyelid. She's so gorgeous. And sweet, and smart, and he just loves her so much.

"What are your plans for Valentine's Day?"

He frowns, "Uh, nothing. Why?"

"Just wondering you know, if there was anyone that had like, caught your eye or anything," she falters a bit on her words, which is unlike her, and her hand fiddles with the bracelet on her wrist. He knows Steve got it for her, for their anniversary.

"No," he says slowly, "just me again this year," he looks over her face, which still looks like she wants to ask something, "why?"

Nancy looks taken aback by this and she bites her bottom lip, going to run a hand through her hair, but she settles for twirling a curl that's already fallen,

"Um, I was just, you know this is Steve and I's first Valentine's Day, so I was just, um, wanting to get another guy's opinion," she winces hard enough for the both of them. "It was dumb, never mind,"

Jonathan feels his face heat, and his heart start racing. Of course that's all she wanted, was to ask about what to do for Steve.

"Well, um, there's always cologne, or, you could cook him dinner. I know you can't cook that well but, I could help, like show you how. Or, I heard some girls talking about this website in class, for like, if Victoria's Secret isn't good enough, and I saw condoms on sale at Walgreens the other day,"

"You want me to buy condoms?!" she shrieks, causing several people to look at them.

Jonathan wants to crawl in a hole and die, and he starts wringing his hands together,

"Um, sorry, I don't, was that, damn. I don't know anything about Valentine's Day! Why would you ask me?!" He demands hysterically.

"Well, I! I didn't think you'd tell me to get lingerie!" She hisses.

“I don’t know, I figured Steve would like it,” he cringes, “god why are we even talking about this?”

Nancy frowns, “I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have brought it up. We’re um, we may not be the best people to talk about sex together.”

He’s thinking that his sex life is nonexistent when he realizes what she said and nods, moving to stand up, “”You’re right Nance, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to be like weird,”

“No, no I didn’t mean it like that,” she says quickly, reaching towards him.

He’s already standing up, he’s gotta get out of here. He’s a fucking idiot. His jacket is in Steve’s car. His backpack too. Oh well. He’ll get it tomorrow. He stands up and starts making his way down the bleachers,

“Jonathan come on! The game is about to start,” Nancy calls.

He’s just gotten onto the gym floor, when their team comes out. He sees Steve, wearing his bright green uniform, and sneakers. He looks over to the bleachers and smiles, and even from here, Jonathan can see his eyes narrow in confusion. He holds up a hand, and Steve catches his eye, before he heads to the gym door, resigned to the long, cold walk home.

He’s surprised when a hand stops the door from opening. It’s Steve’s, cheeks slightly pink from exertion, of running over.

“Where the hell are you going Byers?”

Jonathan sighs, “Talk to Nancy about it after your game.”

Steve’s nose wrinkles, “No. Come on.”

“Steve, I’m serious. I’m gonna go.”

Steve honest to god pouts, “No. What did I do? Nothing. Whatever it is with Nance, it’s nothing, I swear. Come on, I want you to watch me play.”

Jonathan stares at him, but Steve stares back,

“Come on man, you know I’m trying to get a scholarship, that means I’ve gotta play.”

Jonathan realizes belatedly the game has started, even though Steve is still on the sidelines, and coach probably isn’t gonna play him if he doesn’t get a move on. He sighs.

“Okay, fine. I’ll stay.”

Steve smiles wide and throws his arm around Jonathan, pulling him into a tight hug. It's wonderful and over much too quickly. He jogs back to the sidelines and Jonathan slinks back over to his spot near Nancy. She smiles at him, and he sits next to her. She's very pointedly not touching him, even though they're squished, and she's on her phone, her cheeks still pink. Finally, Jonathan nudges her thigh with his knee and he sees a small smile cross her face, but she doesn't look up.

"I hope they play him soon," he says softly.

"Me too," she says softly, pocketing her phone.

The awkwardness is over, at least for Nancy it seems. She presses back closer to him, and cheers loudly when Steve scores a basket. At half time, she wiggles in front of him, her ass in her tight skinny jeans in his face, as she shimmies out of the bleachers to grab snacks.

She comes back with an extremely buttery pretzel, her favorite and a bottle of Dr.Pepper, his favorite. They share the pretzel and soda, Nancy nearly dumping it all over them, as she jumps up cheering, as their team wins.

The bleachers clear out and they sit, waiting for Steve.

"He did great, didn't he?!" Nancy asks, for the fifth time, "There's no way a scout's not going to want to recruit him!"

“Yeah, he’s pretty talented.”

“Isn’t he?!”

It doesn’t take long for Steve to come out, he clearly didn’t shower or clean up after the game, but he all but runs over to them, in a hoodie and sweatpants. Nancy heads down the bleachers, and throws her arms around him. He picks her up and swings her around, kissing her,

“You did amazing!” he says, finally setting her down on the ground.

She laughs and Jonathan picks up their trash, before heading down to join them.

“Great game,” he says, trying to keep an appropriate amount of distance from the couple. Steve’s got a wide smile on his face, and Jonathan’s a bit shocked when he pulls him in for a hug. He’s still holding Nancy’s hand so she gets smushed in too, and his head is buried in Steve’s neck, smelling of a hint of his cologne and sweat. He finally gets with the program and hugs back, and then Steve’s pulling away, cheeks pink and smiling. Nancy’s smiling too, and Jonathan’s going to go blind from the beauty.

“Thank you! Now let’s go celebrate!” He says excitedly, taking Jonathan’s arm and pulling them out of the gym.

“Steve, I have homework that’s due tomorrow,” Nancy complains.

Steve frowns, “Please?”

“We’ve hung out every night this week,” Nancy says back.

“Well we can come over and study,” He says, squeezing Jonathan’s arm.

She snorts, “Studying to you involves at least two orgasms.”

Jonathan lets out a shocked chuckle and Nancy doesn’t even have the decency to look embarrassed. Steve either. Jonathan pulls away, right before they get to the front doors and makes up an excuse about needing to go to the bathroom. He heads into the boy’s bathroom and stares in the mirror. His face is flushed, and it’s been a long day to hang out with people you’re in love with, who don’t love you back. He splashes some water on his face, and licks his lips, before heading back to the hall.

Steve and Nancy are whisper - shouting at each other, but they stop as soon as he comes up. Nancy’s shoulders are tense, and Steve looks like a puppy that’s just been kicked,

“What’s going on?” he asks with a raised eyebrow.

“Nothing,” Nancy says quickly, “Steve’s just upset that I truly do have to go home.”

Steve nods and holds the door open for Nancy and Jonathan to follow

him outside. It's cold, and Jonathan wraps his arms around himself as Nancy shivers. They head to Steve's car, and pile in, and he blasts the heat. It's awkwardly silent, and Nancy slips her jacket on, rubbing her hands together. Steve digs a pack of cigarettes and the lighter out of the center console, and lights one.

"I can hang out with you, if you want to celebrate," he says, before he can stop himself.

The two of them whip around, Steve's cigarette nearly falling out of his mouth in shock, Nancy's mouth a little 'o'. He's about to take it back, when Nancy says, "No" at the same time Steve says "Yes." Jonathan looks between them confused, and Steve turns to Nancy. She gives him a firm look, a look he's seen her give to Mike several times, and Steve sighs,

"I'll be okay man. Maybe the three of us can do something tomorrow."

And wow this is what it feels like to have your heart breaking. Of course Steve doesn't want to hang out with just him. That would be ridiculous. They're not even friends really. He's just friends with him because of Nancy, and Nancy's just friends with him because of, who the fuck knows. He feels like shit, and he crosses his arms over his chest, and sits silently for the rest of the car ride.

Nancy keeps trying to talk to him, about anything really, but he ignores her, nodding along if she turns to look back at him. The ride is silent except for Nancy, Steve's quiet too, just chain smoking cigarettes. He pulls up to Nancy's house first, and she unbuckles, leaning over to kiss him. Steve kisses back chastly, and pulls away. Nancy gives him an apologetic look, and turns back to Jonathan.

She smiles, but it doesn't quite reach her eyes. She still reaches a hand out, and stares at him, until he squeezes it,

"See you tomorrow?"

Jonathan purses his lips, still trying to figure out what the hell is going on. He's sick of being out of the loop. *That's ridiculous,* he scolds himself, *you're always going to be out of the loop. They're dating. You're not a part of that.* Even though they often make him feel like he is. Well, they probably don't mean to. He just makes that up himself. Inserts himself into their life. So of course Nancy wouldn't want Jonathan the freak hanging out alone with her boyfriend. Even less if she knew he was bisexual. It's not that he thought Nancy was a bad person, or he could hold a damn flame to her, but she probably didn't want him making Steve feel bad or uncomfortable.

"Have a good night Nancy," he says, voice still a little flat.

She frowns slightly, and says one more goodbye, before heading up to the front door. They wait until she gets inside, and then Steve turns around to him,

"Are you gonna sit back there and make me feel like an Uber or what?" Steve asks.

Jonathan presses his lips together, and awkwardly pulls himself out of the backseat. When he settles himself in the front seat, buckles his seatbelt and adjusts the heaters back onto him, he sees Steve staring

at him, yet another cigarette hanging from his mouth.

“What?” He asks.

“Nothing. Let’s go,” Steve puts the car in reverse, and rests his arm behind Jonathan’s bed, angling his body so he can look over his shoulder.

It’s awkwardly quiet and finally Jonathan can’t help but break the silence,

“Can I have one of those?” He asks, holding his hand out, but not looking at Steve.

“What? A cig?” Steve asks shocked.

“Yeah,” he says.

He doesn’t meet Steve’s eyes, are sure they’re shocked, he’s never smoked in front of Steve before. Lonnie used to smoke, the scent used to disgust him. But Nancy’d convinced him to steal some and they’d smoked back in the day, well coughed up smoke hidden up in her treehouse. He’s smoked several times after that though, mostly alone. Mostly because no one made smoking look cooler than Steve and Nancy and he didn’t want to look like an idiot.

He can feel Steve’s eyes on him as he slips a cigarette out of the pack and lights it. He inhales deeply, nicotine filling his lungs and his eyes

slide shut, and he tilts his head back against the seat, entire body relaxing. Steve lets out a choking sound and Jonathan cracks open an eye. Steve's got his hands on the steering wheel awfully tight, entire body tense. Suddenly Jonathan gets it.

"She told you," he says flatly.

Steve's head whips to look at him,

"What?"

"Nancy. About the lingerie comment. Look I wasn't trying to be creepy, or a perv, or," Jonathan's rambling at this point, but Steve's gaping at him, "anyway I'm really sorry." He quickly sticks the cigarette back in his mouth to shut himself up.

"Jonathan," Steve starts, before clearing his throat, "you are an idiot. Nancy told me about the lingerie thing but I don't care. And neither does she! We're friends. And friends try to get each other laid, apparently," he nudges him and cracks a smile.

He's so ridiculous that it makes Jonathan smile back, just a little and Steve cheers,

"There he is!"

"So," Steve says after a few moments, "any girls you're hoping to see in lingerie this year?"

Jonathan snorts, “I wish.”

“What do you mean?”

He fixes Steve a stare until the other boy looks over, “What?”

“I mean that would imply there’s a girl who wants me to see her in lingerie, which there isn’t,” Jonathan says quietly. He’s not, devastated by that fact. He only wants Nancy anyway. She’s the prettiest girl at their school. And the sweetest. He’s resigned to the fact he’ll be a virgin until college, at least.

“I don’t think that’s true.”

Jonathan snorts, “Yeah right. You’re Steve Harrington, all the girls are throwing themselves at you.”

Steve glances over at him curiously, “Yeah? And you’re Jonathan Byers.”

“I am. Resident freak and fag all in one,” he says cheerfully, rolling down his window and flicking the cigarette butt outside.

It’s quiet for a moment and Jonathan looks over at Steve. He’s gritting his teeth and his hands are tight on the steering wheel again,

“You know what, then fuck them. Anyone would be lucky to be with you.”

He smiles at how serious Steve sounds, “Thanks man. But I don’t think Hawkins is gonna get the memo.”

Steve makes a noise in the back of his throat, and they keep driving. Halsey’s playing in the background, and it’s only about five more minutes until they pull up at Jonathan’s house. Steve parks and turns to look at him, which makes Jonathan look down. He unbuckles his seatbelt and moves to slide out when Steve places a hand on his arm,

“Hey, thanks for coming tonight. I love it when you watch me play,” he smiles and runs his other hand through his hair.

Jonathan’s trying not to have a breakdown from Steve saying *you* and not *both of you* , when suddenly Steve is in his personal space, cologne overwhelming him in the best way as he presses a kiss to his cheek. It feels like it lasts an eternity, but it really can’t be more than a couple of seconds, and when he pulls away his cheeks are pink, but he’s also opened Jonathan’s door. Jonathan tries to say something, but ends up silent, feeling his own face heat up, despite to cold creeping into the car from the open door.

“I’ll see you tomorrow Jonathan,” Steve waves.

“Yeah, um, see you tomorrow,” he slides out of the car and shuts the door, just standing there, trying to figure out what the hell happened.

Finally he realizes that Steve isn't going to leave until he gets inside, so he jogs up the front steps and swings open the door, shutting it and immediately collapsing against it.

"Everything alright?" His mom asks, looking up from a magazine.

"Yeah, everything's great."

+1

Valentine's Day was a joke. Well it wasn't a joke if you had someone to love, Jonathan supposes, but he doesn't. So it's a joke. Every holiday in a small town is like Christmas. For example, all grades were forced into making Valentine's, there was a Valentine's dance for all ages at the high school tonight, and there were goddamn pink and red hearts all over town.

He's in a shitty, shitty mood. Even his mom has a date with Hopper, and Will will be getting ready for the dance at the Wheelers with the other kids and Nancy will be with Steve and he'll be alone. It's not fair to have a day dedicated to letting the alone people know they're alone.

He doesn't even look nice, he's wearing a black thermal shirt and the darkest wash jeans he has, because what's more anti - Valentine's Day than wearing all black? He's angrily shoving his backpack into his locker when Nancy comes bouncing up. His jaw drops. Her hair is in soft curls, and she has a red bow pinned in it. She's wearing eyeliner and her lips are bright red, stark against her white teeth. But the dress she's wearing, it's a white v-neck dress that cuts so low he can

see a mole adoring her cleavage and is ends mid thigh. She's wearing a jean jacket over that and dangly heart earrings and red wedge heels.

"Holy shit Nance, you look beautiful."

"Thank you!" She says, pulling him in for a hug, "Happy Valentine's Day!"

"Happy v-day."

She slaps his shoulder, "Don't do that! Be excited!"

"Why?"

"I don't know, because!"

"Where's Steve?"

"He said he's running late, why, wanna wait for him?"

"No, I better get to class. I'll see him at lunch?"

She nods, "Yeah, for sure! Have a good day!"

“You too,” he mumbles, heading to class.

It’s almost impossible to get work done, and Mrs. Meyers gives up about halfway through the hour, especially since Valentine’s will be delivered soon. Every year, kids spent a ridiculous amount of money on personalized Valentine’s that got passed out during the day. Jonathan had never received one.

So he about falls out of his chair in shock when someone calls his name. He can’t even answer, his classmates pointing him out, and the red paper heart is set on his desk. His heart is racing as he looks around, this has to be a joke.

Finally he moves to open it. The handwriting isn’t familiar and it just says:

Happy Valentine’s Day cutie,

I’ve really wanted to tell you how I feel, but can never manage the nerve. Meet me after school by the bleachers so we can talk.

Xoxo

Your secret admirer

Jonathan pockets the note quickly, eyes scanning around the classroom again. It’s definitely a joke.

He is going to die a slow, painful, blue-ball filled death. Steve and

Nancy together are not a good combo. Nancy keeps tossing her hair over her shoulder, or rubbing her collarbone, and her boobs look so good, then there's Steve who's got one too many buttons undone, and Jonathan can see his chest hair and he's got on a really tight pair of jeans, and, lunch is gonna be long.

Nancy flicks her hair again, and takes a sip of her water,

"So a little birdie told me you got a Valentine," she says with a smirk.

"Yeah," he grunts.

"From who?" Steve asks.

Jonathan shrugs, "I dunno. It didn't say."

"Oooh, a secret admirer?" Nancy asks excitedly.

"I guess so."

"What did it say?" She demands.

"To meet them after school."

"Oh my god! This is so exciting."

“Told you people were into you man!” Steve says with a smile.

“It doesn’t matter, I’m not going.”

Nancy’s face falls, “Wait what?”

“I’m not going, this is all a joke anyway.”

“How do you know?” She demands.

“Because Nancy, it’s me, and no one at this school could possibly like me. I’m not trying to waste my time.”

“But, maybe they’re just too afraid to tell you,” she says softly, twirling a curl around her finger.

“Can you just drop it?” he snaps, “nobody in fucking Hawkins, Indiana likes me. And they never will. I’m fine with it, why aren’t you?”

When he looks up, Nancy looks on the verge of tears and she nods,

“Um, I’m gonna go, I’ll see you guys later,” she says, voice watery. She scrambles out of the booth, and all but runs away.

Jonathan scrubs a hand over his face, “Shit. I didn’t mean to yell at her.”

“I know,” Steve says, “but you know Nance. Always wanting everyone to be happy. Look, just, go meet them? For me? Do you know how much courage this must have took, for the other person not to even show up?” Steve asks, brown eyes wide.

Jonathan sighs, “Yeah, I guess.”

“For real, just go. For me? And if it ends up being someone playing a prank, we’ll kick their asses together, I promise,” he stands up, “I gotta go get Nance.”

“Please tell her I’m sorry.”

“I will. Go meet them Jonathan. Take a chance.”

Jonathan does it. Mostly because Steve and Nancy were his ride home, and after the scene today at lunch he didn’t feel like asking for a ride. Not without privately apologizing to Nancy.

It’s kind of cold out, and he regrets not grabbing his jacket, before he’d come out. He pulls his sleeves over his hands, and leans against the railing, waiting. It’s only been a few minutes when he hears a noise, and looks over, waiting. His heart is in his throat. He just knows this is going to be a joke. But who appears is.. Nancy. And a few steps behind her.. Steve.

“Guys, what are you doing here? I’m supposed to meet my secret admirer,” He says, confused and quickly. He’s kind of embarrassed, he doesn’t want to be standing out here with his friends because he was too scared to do it alone.

“Surprise,” Nancy says, walking closer to him. Her nose is pink from the cold, and she’s shifting from leg to leg.

Jonathan’s heart drops, “What do you, that’s mean. This isn’t funny.” He says angrily.

“What do you mean?” Steve asks, “It’s us.”

“You’re kidding. This is just some huge joke to you, isn’t it? Look, I don’t, I don’t know what you’re trying to do here,” it takes him a while to get the words out, he feels like he’s going to have a panic attack, and suddenly he has to sit down.

How could they know? He’d been so careful. Why would they do this to him? Tease him? He couldn’t help but love them. They were both so amazing and now they hated him. They wanted to embarrass him. And he deserved it. He shouldn’t have tried to be their friends, ever. He should have just been the freak like he was clearly destined to be.

He doesn’t even realized he’d actually plopped down on the semi frozen ground until both Nancy and Steve are in front of him.

“Jonathan, hey, hey, look at me,” Nancy says, forcing him to look up at her, “Breathe for me, okay? Take a deep breath in, out, in,” He keeps his eyes locked on hers and his chest heaves.

“What, what the fuck?” He asks, looking at her, and turning to look at Steve, who’s at his side, rubbing his back.

“Look, Jonathan. This is real. I realized, we realized,” she glances over at Steve, “Wanna help me out here?”

“You’re the one who planned what we were supposed to say. You made us notecards!”

“Improvise Steve!”

“You made me memorize them!” He argues back.

Jonathan can’t help but laugh, even though he feels like he’s going to cry. He closes his eyes,

“Just tell me, please,” he whispers.

Nancy’s hands are on his jaw again, and he opens his eyes, she’s extremely close to him, and he feels like he could count the different shades of blue in her eyes,

“I love you,” she says.

“I love you too,” Steve chimes in.

Jonathan looks between them, dumbfounded, “I’m confused.”

“Look Byers, we want to date you. Nancy and I want to date you. As in the three of us, together. Three tickets to the movies, three meals at dinner, three of us in my bed, three,” Steve says, walking on his knees so he can sit in front of Jonathan like Nancy.

Jonathan stares. Their eyes are both serious, Steve’s biting nervously at his lip, hands fiddling with the sleeves of his dress shirt. Nancy’s eyes look suspiciously wet, as if she could start crying at any moment, and she’s shivering.

“You love me?” he asks, unbelieving.

“Yes,” she says softly, “this, this has been for awhile now, probably forever, and Steve, I saw the way he looked at you, and, we want you Jonathan. We’re all supposed to be together. All of us.” She says fiercely.

Jonathan smiles slightly at that and turns to Steve,

“You really-”

Steve cuts him off with a wide smile, “You even gotta ask me that man?”

Jonathan wrings his hands together, he has to ask one more time, just to, his dreams do not usually come true. He doesn't get what the wants, ever,

"Not a joke?"

They both shake their heads quickly and he sighs, he supposes he should speak now. Say something of value.

"Um, I love you guys too. I have for, a long time."

They both look at each other and then Nancy lets out a half laugh, half sob, and hastily rubs at her cheek, where a tear slipped out,

"God, way to keep us waiting!" She says loudly, pushing herself higher onto her knees and leaning in to kiss him.

She kisses like she knows what she's doing, soft but sure, and he can feel her breasts pressed against his chest as he tries to keep up. She breaks away much too quickly, he could drown in her, and smiles,

"I've wanted to do that forever," she breathes.

"Not longer than me," Steve says, leaning in next.

Steve is warm and demanding, his hands gripping Jonathan's jaw as he teases his mouth open so he can taste. Their kiss lasts a lot longer, Steve panting against his mouth, as Jonathan breaks away to breathe. Nancy laughs at the fact that Steve is out of breath and he just flips her off.

Jonathan's trying to catch his breath and understand what just happened, and wrap his mind around the fact he has a boyfriend and girlfriend now, when Steve pushes himself to his feet.

"Come on, I'm fucking freezing."

"Thanks for breaking the moment," Nancy says, as he pulls a pack of cigarettes from his pocket and lights one.

"There can be a million more moments in the heat Nancy Wheeler."

"Yeah but this was our first one, Steve Harrington," she says sassily, getting up off the ground.

"Oh trust me, I plan on there being plenty of first moments tonight," he says, leaning down to help Jonathan up, "most of which involve running out of hot water with my boyfriend and girlfriend," he says, shooting a wink at Jonathan.

Nancy rolls her eyes, but takes the cigarette from Steve and takes a puff, "Hm," she says, exhaling a cloud of smoke, "so long as we can make use of that detachable shower head, I'm in."

Jonathan feels his face heat at the thought and Steve must see it because he laughs. He holds Jonathan's hand as they start walking to the car, Nancy trailing in front of them, stolen cigarette in her hand. Steve stops to yank his keys out of his pocket,

"Yo Nance!"

She spins around, and Jonathan suddenly sees why she's racing to the car, her whole body is nearly red, well the skin that's exposed to the frigid air. He tosses the keys to her,

"You drive! I'm sitting in the back with my boyfriend," he says, given Jonathan's hand an extra squeeze.

He feels like he's on cloud nine, he doesn't know what to think, or feel, when Steve bumps his shoulder,

"By the way, Nancy did get some lingerie."

Author's Note:

> It's heavily implied Jonathan self harms, as well as they were abused by his father.
> Also idk why Nancy cried so much in this, like shes a bad ass but she's crying? idk
> also i think smoking is hot so thats why theres a lot truthfully
> Please come talk to me on tumblr: Mickey-mousemilkovich